

Mr. Will H. Hays Tells Why He Joined the Films and What He Will Do About It

By HAROLD PHILLIPS.

BECAUSE he needed the money and was tired of politics are reasons ascribed by Will Hays for his decision to be the Autocrat of the Movies at \$150,000 a year.

Seated in magnificent offices formerly occupied by Charles H. Sabin, president of the Guaranty Trust Company of New York, amidst antique furniture, oriental rugs and decorations verging on artistic heights, Mr. Hays last week gave out his first personal interview. Heretofore his statements to the press have been printed "hand-outs."

Among other things, he said: "I know nothing about the technical end of pictures. I hope to learn, however, and am right now going to 'school,' like a child, to master this great industry. I accepted my post for three reasons—first, because it offered a chance to engage in public service; second, because it offered a chance to retire from politics; third, because I needed the money."

"I received the offer from a clear sky December 8 from gentlemen I did not know personally and for whom I had never done anything."

Mr. Hays declares he will be neither a censor nor a reformer. He will not eradicate from pictures, he says, as to do so would kill interest. He is against censorship, feeling the public will censor objectionable films by ignoring them. He hopes to see a wider use of films in schools and churches.

MR. HAYS has a task ahead of him. Judge Landis' position as arbiter of baseball is dwarfed by the extent of plenary powers granted Hays in his new role. Already there is rumbling of dissension. Two big producing companies—Vitagraph and Pathe—have balked at affiliating with the new combine known as the Producers and Distributors Association. Both of these companies were parties to the preliminary negotiations installing Hays as chief of all filmdom, but, with the drafting of the by-laws, came the reversal and they retired from membership on the ground that undesirable fullness of authority was granted Hays.

DAVID WARK GRIFFITH could probably teach Mr. Hays more about the technical end of the movies in one month than the former cabinet member will learn in a year of promiscuous pattering and contact with producers whose first thought is dividends and moral tone afterwards. Tyros at any game are apt to be timid.

Mr. Griffith is not timid. Anyone who can condense three volumes of Carlyle's "French Revolution" into a graphic film tale and dispense it under the title of "Orphans of the Storm" could do wonders in a classroom.

Mr. Hays' first requisition on the talent under his direction, ought to be a filmization of the "History of the United States," with David Wark Griffith at the blackboard.

TONIGHT Poli's will offer Oscar Straus' "The Last Waltz," with Eleanor Painter, a Shubert operetta of compensating qualities and resemblance to "The Merry Widow" and "The Count of Luxembourg." The piece is lavishly staged and endowed with a plenitude of footlight personalities most of whom are possessed of singing voices. Eddie Nelson has succeeded James Barlow in the comedy role and, through subtle impersonation of the originator, has contrived a rather distinctive part. Walter Woolf plays opposite Miss Painter. Unusually effective song numbers include "Live for Today," "Dance Polka," "Song of the Mirror" and "A Baby in Love."

"THE GRAND DUKE," which opens at the National tomorrow, gives a notion of the difference in point of view of France and America. Over there, and indeed upon the Continent generally, there is not the feeling of hopelessness for the child who does not know his father. A young man there who has been born out of wedlock is not a person to be scorned, but he may, through his own efforts, rise to eminence and there will not be a shutting of doors against him. Nor is the mother likely to be shunned simply because her love has been too expressive. Playwrights in this country do not approach their subjects as lightly as is the case in France, and so Sacha Guitry with his "The Grand Duke" is said to provide something of novelty and of freshness when he offers in comedy vein, a story of an illegitimate son who gains happiness without loss of self-respect and who is held in esteem by his fellows and by all with whom he comes in contact.

THE long-awaited coming of "Ziegfeld Follies" to the National Theater is now definitely announced for one week, beginning Sunday, April 9.

The Follies this year has a libretto written by Channing Pollock, with the assistance of Gene Buck, Willard Mack, Ralph Spence and Bud De Silva, who have contributed additional lines and lyrics. The music is by Vic-

Plays on Way to Play Houses of Washington

ZIEGFELD'S "Follies" is the coming lure at the National. "East Is West" returns to Poli's in a fortnight. "The Charlatan" comes to the Garrick April 10. Blossom Seely co-stars with Avon Comedy Four at Keith's. "Folly Town," with Gus Ray clowning, comes to the Gayety. "The Whirl of New York" returns to the Belasco next week. "Rip Van Winkle's Dream" features the next Strand bill. "Chick- Chick," a new burlesque, comes to the Capitol.

GAYETY "Sporting Widows"

JACOB AND JERMON open their new edition of the "Sporting Widows" this afternoon at the Gayety Theater for a week's engagement. Al K. Hall, who has already established his reputation as one of the best comedians on the Columbia circuit, heads the large cast. In his support are such favorites as Helen Renstrom, a prima donna with a truly wonderful voice, and Gertrude Peck, who enacts the soubrette role with a vivacity that soon becomes infectious. The chorus, which beams with youthful beauty, is free from the type of girls who have repeatedly been seen in burlesque. And every one, in addition to looking pretty, can really sing and dance.

The show is replete with catchy songs that can be easily whistled, while the dance numbers have been arranged in such a manner as are sure to please the eye. Scenically the current show is up to the best standards of modern musical comedy. And it has been costumed very elaborately. Never before have Jacobs and Jermon spent so much money on a production. The attraction, as a result, is not only one of the best of this season, but takes rank with any burlesque show that has ever been played on the Columbia circuit.

Smoking hereafter will be permitted at all performances throughout the house.

VARIETY FEATURES NEW SHOW BILLINGS



POLI'S "The Last Waltz"

"THE LAST WALTZ," with Eleanor Painter, the latest Oscar Straus operetta, which will be presented at Poli's Theater for a week's engagement beginning tonight, has been acclaimed the musical sensation of a decade because of its surprisingly beautiful score, its lavish production, its clever and amusing book, and its large chorus of pretty girls. The story is excellent as well and serves as a fitting complement to the tuneful music.

The action passes in Vandalia, a mythical kingdom in the Balkans, where Lieut. Jack Morington, U. S. N., is spending a leave of absence. While there he saves a charming lady from humiliation at the hands of the prince regent, and is immediately thrown into jail. With the help of the young lady he escapes from prison, but he returns later, fearing that his escape may cause her to be jailed instead. In the castle where he is held in custody, he is given the freedom of several rooms and uses this opportunity to woo the girl he has befriended. At last, with the aid of his orderly, a pugnacious and resourceful gob, he outwits his enemies and carries the lady of his choice off with him.

The cast supporting Miss Painter, who sings the prima donna role, includes Eddie Nelson, Walter Woolf, Harry Fender, Eleanor Griffith, Florence Morrison, Harrison Brookbank, Isabel Rodriguez, Gladys Walton, Edward Golden, Irving Rose, Timothy Daly, Frank J. Curran, Robert Calley, Raymond Metz, George Evans and a chorus of rare beauty. There is an unusually attractive chorus, recruited from all parts of the country.

The entire production of "The Last Waltz" was made under the personal supervision of J. J. Shubert.

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Capitol "Mile-a-Minute Girls"

DISTINCTLY different from any other burlesque attraction—that is the claim for Lew Stark's "Mile-a-Minute Girls," which will open a week's engagement at the Capitol Theater with a matinee this afternoon. Today's will be the first appearance of the show in Washington, and if it is accorded the same reception here that it has received elsewhere, it is certain to prove a record-breaker.

Featuring funny Ray Read and Lee Hickman, two of the best-known comedians of the burlesque stage, the show is in two acts of eight scenes, each of which is said to be replete with laughable situations, catchy musical numbers, brilliant ensembles, and novel specialties. The first act is entitled "Nearly a Husband" and the second is called "The Wonder Springs." Both are said to be based on brand new material.

In addition to Read and Hickman, the cast boasts several other stars. Included in their number are Mattie Delice, the Marks Brothers, Viola Bohlan, Estelle Nock, George A. Woods and several others, not forgetting, of course, a big chorus of pretty, sprightly girls.

The show carries a carload of special scenery and the costumes are reputed to be unique as well as elaborate.

BELASCO "Some Girl"

A BRAND new cargo revue, "Some Girl," and a trio of headliners will comprise the Shubert vaudeville program which opens at the Belasco with the matinee this afternoon. "Some Girl" is a condensed adaptation of the well-known Broadway success, "The Rose Girl," rated as among the most tuneful and mirth provoking of the current season's productions.

Louis Simon, a comedian of parts is the chief funmaker and he is assisted by an array of principals familiar to musical comedy lovers, which includes Nina Olivette, Shep Camp, Florence Shubert, Ray Crane, A. Barbour Halliday, Jane Taylor, Eleanor Bennett, Florence Earle, Herbert Light and Joseph D. Miller. "Some Girl" abounds in music and dancing and boasts a full sized ensemble of pretty girls. The revue is in two acts and a baker's dozen of scenes which provide elaborate settings and costumes.

Vaudeville acts of stellar eminence will include Bobby O'Neil and His Four Queens. The queens are four very alluring girls, possessed of nimble feet besides more than average beauty and charm, hence their description: Sam White and Eva White who were recently featured with the Bert Williams show are making their first tour of the Shubert circuit and will offer an interesting comedy diversion. Louis Simon with his company will present a laughing vehicle called "Too Many Chauffeurs." Rudinoff will provide pictures in smoke and other feats of an artistic character and three other new acts will complete the bill.

The usual screen features, which include the Shubert News Weekly and Pithy Paragraphs, will be shown.

To Take Outing.

GEORGE ARLISS is going to take that long-coveted vacation from the stage and screen this summer, but not before completing his third picture for United Artists. The distinguished actor's destination will be Europe.

KEITH'S Marion Morgan Dancers

THE Marion Morgan Dancers will be the sole and absolute headliners at the B. F. Keith Theater this week, commencing at the matinee tomorrow and ending next Sunday night. They are an all-American organization and easily lead other groups of classic dancers. They will present "Helen of Troy," a Greek drama in four scenes, portraying the adventures of the faithless wife of Menelaus.

The production is rated as the most effective and artistic of Miss Morgan's career. She composed, staged and costumed it. The cast includes Josephine McLean, Josephine Head, Louise Riley, Carl Heberlein, John Triemalt and Albert Zapp. The auxiliaries include Greek maidens, African slaves, captive girls, and goddesses. The scenes show the judgment of Paris; the house of Menelaus; the leave-taking of Paris; the abduction of Helen; the tent of Menelaus during the siege of Troy; and within the walls of Troy.

The extra added attraction will be genial and rotund Tom Wise, "The Gentleman from Mississippi" star, who will present a specially selected company, including Nina Mac, in "Memories." Roy Briant is the author and the theme involves stage life, with the well-known Tom Wise brand of comedy injected.

Third in stellar order will be beautiful and capable Elizabeth Brice, formerly of Brice and King in vaudeville, but more recently with "The Overseas Revue," and still later, Broadway shows. She will sing the exclusive nits written for her by Neville Flessner. A few minutes with Jack Benny are promised, and the outcome should be salves of laughter, as Benny is at his best in combining eccentric chatter with violence.

The hilarious hobo, Charles Ahern, one of the funniest tramp characters of the times, will offer a "wild man" burlesque, assisted by a large company. Meehan's Leaping Hounds are listed, likewise the Unusual Due in surprising roller skating, and other merry features including the "100 for You" contest fill the bill. Today at 3 and 8:15, at B. F. Keith's, last week's program, led by Daphne Pollard, will be given its final performance.

FILM STARS FIGHT FOR CURIOUS SCARF PIN

Petrified Human Eye Found in Michigan River is Object of Envy for Fortunate Possessor at Fox Studio.

TOM MIX tried to buy it when he was in New York last summer. William Farnum several times has named a price he would pay for it. William Russell announced what he'd be willing to spend. Shirley Mason saw it and marveled, and asked how much money it would take to separate it from its present owner. Mrs. Mary Carr has often looked at it, shuddered, and exclaimed "How wonderful!" Prominent visitors at the great William Fox film studios have seen it, and while many have shuddered, as does Mrs. Carr, and hesitate to touch it, most people who have seen it remark that it is the most unusual thing they ever saw.

And "it" is. In fact, as far as scientific research goes, it is the only one in the wide world that has reached human hands. Whenever the owner brings it to the plant he is besieged by everybody who knows he has it, to give them just one more look, and then they go away to talk about it.

The object which has caused so much discussion and wonderment about the Fox studios is owned by Steve Williams, head of the information department. It is a petrified human eye which has been made into a scarf pin. Mr. Williams explains that it was presented to him about eighteen years ago by an explorer friend who found it near the Knife river, in northern Michigan.

The existence of this curious relic is well known to scientific institutions, several of which have had it in their possession for brief periods to study and make microscopical observations of the stone. It was the subject of a scientific paper read at a meeting of eye and ear surgeons as long ago as 1898—which paper was later issued in pamphlet form.

The eye was cut by a Chicago lapidary many years ago and mounted in a good setting for the explorer. It is highly polished and has the appearance of agate. All the component parts of an eye are perfectly distinguishable. The eye is somewhat smaller than normal, which is said to be due either to shrinkage during petrification or because the eye belonged to a prehistoric tribe of Indians whose eyes were smaller than normal. It is said that examination at the Smithsonian Institution, many years ago left no doubt as to its identity, as the microscope revealed even the blood vessels.

The owner refuses to part with it at any price, although he has had numerous offers.

NATIONAL "The Grand Duke"

ONE of the most important theatrical events of the season is scheduled at The National for one week beginning tomorrow night, when David Belasco presents Lionel Atwill in "The Grand Duke," a Parisian comedy by Sacha Guitry. This production will mark Mr. Atwill's second appearance in a Guitry play, he having been seen last season with great success in "Deburau," an earlier play by the same author.

"The Grand Duke" enjoyed a long and successful engagement in Paris, with the author in the cast, and was hailed as one of the best plays Guitry has written. The English version has been made by Achmed Abdullah.

Mr. Atwill is said to be unusually well suited to the title role, a character, it is promised, that will reveal his remarkable versatility in an entirely new light. For Mr. Atwill's support a distinguished cast has been engaged by Mr. Belasco, including such well-known favorites as Lina Abartanell, Vivian Tobin, Morgan Parley and John L. Shine.

The play has been produced under the personal supervision of Mr. Belasco.

The Paulist Choristers, with Father Finn conducting, will come to the National the afternoon of April 21.

Seized Opportunity.

WHEN Mason and Keeler, the farceurs, missed their train connection in Pittsburgh last week and missed the Sunday matinee at the Belasco, the mishap spelled opportunity for Miss Camille Little, a Washington girl. She went on in the spot, second after intermission, a hard place to fill on any vaudeville bill, and, in the vernacular, "cleaned up" with her snappy song and dance offering. Miss Little is a niece of George O'Malley, stage manager at the Belasco.

For Russ Artists.

RALPH BLOCK, associate editor of the Goldwyn scenario department, has been active in getting material from West Coast motion picture stars to be included in the program for a big benefit to be given in New York for destitute Russian artists.